QUANTA Magazine

QUANTA

1984 TO 2010

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http://www.quanta.org.uk

Volume 27 - Issue 2
Apr/May 2010

Information on the Association

Membership of QUANTA, the independent QL user group, is by annual subscription. The Membership Secretary can supply full details. Copies of the association's constitution & annual accounts are available from the Secretary. There is an extensive software library. There are active national subgroups. Details are given in the Member's Guide and in this magazine.

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5^{TH} JUNE 2010

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EDITORIAL Tony Hill

Having agreed to take over as Magazine Editor, I must admit that I hadn't anticipated becoming a Cub reporter or sitting down as Editor and putting finger-tip to keyboard to produce an editorial month by month. This is rather like being back at school, when at the end of the English lesson the teacher said ' Now, for homework, I want you to produce an essay of no less than 200 words about what you did on your summer holiday.' You know inspiration then, was about the same as it is now - practically zero.

Initially, let me say, that the Printed Paper QUANTA Magazine and the One Megabyte QUANTA eMag will continue to be available - NO PROBLEMS.

Currently one of my interests is producing a QUANTA eMag that is an all singing all dancing coloured version which can be supplied in a crisp clear format that would have Duncan Neithercut jumping up and down with sheer delight as he increased the magnification to x200 then x400 or even x600 so that the PCB or the QL case with the internal motherboard and parts revealed could be seen with total accuracy without the slightest hint of Distortion of what is being viewed,

In my first Editorial Feb/Mar 2010 issue - I supplied a Picture of my Modified QL displaying the internal changes that I had made and I asked you to look closely at the picture to see the two Stripboard Boards that I had designed and built. I wonder how many members who take the Paper Magazine got out their magnifying glasses to try to get a better view of these parts. I did and came to realise how much better it is to have the Magazine in (PDF) Portable Document Format providing what is produced can be supplied with an excellent quality so that what is viewed is an entertaining experience.

Now, some members take our Magazine in PDF Format and I can hear them say ' Wait a minute - I've tried this x200 Magnification and what I see leaves a lot to be desired' - This is exactly the point, I believe, that Duncan Neithercut was making in his article in QUANTA Magazine Aug/Sept 2009. The solution is in your own hands but a number of questions need to be considered and answered.

Do you have an IBM PC or Similar?
Do you run Windows Operating system or have you Linux installed?
Do you have an Apple computer?
OR do you have only a Sinclair QL Computer.

Are you thinking of getting a new PC, Laptop or Netbook? With the advance in technology of Laptops and NetBooks, many QL computer users have decided to join this world and enjoy a more complete computing experience. So. if you have an 'Apple' or 'PC' or 'CLONE ' then you can begin to enjoy the PDF computing view.

Is it difficult to use the PDF Format? Actually its as easy as starting up Quill. But you do need a PDF Viewer - joy of joy's - it's FREE!
For the PC, there are many viewers, but the one most used is Adobe Acrobat Reader. I appreciate that Windows has a number of operating systems: Win 95 , Win 98, Win 2000, Win XP, Vista and now Windows 7.

If you have Win 95 or Win 98, you will only be able to install Acrobat 5 or with an Internet Explorer upgrade to IE 6.0 - Acrobat 6. You will NOT be able to view the High Res version of QUANTA eMag. I have just re-installed Win 98 on an older computer - loaded Acrobat Reader 5 and 6 with the IE 6.0 upgrade and both of these programs do not want to load the PDF Files. Where they do load, the quality is dreadful. If you try to install a later version of Acrobat Reader on Win 95 / Win 98 - the install program will advise you to update your operating system. So go for Win XP - Vista or Windows 7 as your preferred OS (Operating Systems)

I hope to make the QUANTA eMag available for use with Acrobat Reader 9.0 or above - so Win XP to Windows 7 will have no difficulty enjoying the improved eMag. However - if you only have Acrobat Reader 5 or 6, QUANTA eMag will continue to be available as currently supplied. What if I have Acrobat Reader Version 7 or 8? - No excuses - Acrobat Reader is FREE > download the latest version 9.3.2

One point here - if you update to version 9.0 or above > UNINSTALL your current version FIRST! Then install the Updated version. Can't be clearer than that ! Why ? For Win XP - Acrobat Reader 9.3 should install over the top of previous versions OK. If you’re using Vista > Whoops! For some unknown reason you could run into problems - uninstall previous versions first. Windows 7 - I don’t know. I do not have Win 7. Can anyone advise?

What if I'm running Linux on my PC? - well, I've just installed Ubuntu 9.10 alongside Win XP and it has a Document Reader which fires up the QUANTA eMag - no problem and all the internal links work perfectly. I would imagine the Linux community have the PDF Viewer covered for whatever Linux version you have installed. Debian, Slackware etc.

How About Apple computers? Information on the Internet shows that Adobe Acrobat Reader version 9.3 is available for Apple computers.

http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/internet_utilities/adobereader.html

All versions - Apple, Linux, Solaris, Windows - Adobe Reader 9.3

http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/otherversions/

The QUANTA eMag is sent out by email so if you have a PC or similar and are connected to the Internet you will need to obtain an email supplier. Once again nothing to pay you can obtain an account for FREE.

Currently, I use Hotmail, which is made available by Microsoft (MSN). Also, Gmail > Googlemail in the UK is available for FREE and ISP's (Internet Service Providers) make email available to their subscribers - POP3, SMTP etc. If you want to use Outlook, Pegasus Thunderbird or similar.

Now, I have a question for all who currently take the QUANTA eMag...... What is your download speed when connected to the Internet? 28Kb - 56Kb - 2Mb - ? With the arrival of Broadband and faster Internet downloading - a PDF file of say 7.5MB in size should not cause too much of a problem to download from the QUANTA Website - members section.

CHAIRMAN’S NOTES

Sarah Gilpin

The project for the Committee 2009/10 was to modernise the QUANTA Website and to find a CMS that was understandable and user friendly for all Committee members. Content Management System Typo3 was chosen and the new Website was launched at the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 18th April. A number of updates were made in the week leading up to the AGM and we hope that Traders and Subgroups will soon be able to maintain their own pages with local news and events.

The Annual General Meeting was held at Hall Green, Birmingham to reduce the distance travelled by members. The attendance was very disappointing with only 17 people being there for the meeting. The venue was pleasant and accessible, except for the lone train traveller, who found that the information regarding the train availability given in last month’s magazine was not accurate. Apparently the Stratford upon Avon train does not run from Birmingham New Street station but he did eventually arrive.

As previously announced the members were asked for their opinion on Subgroup support by QUANTA and some very interesting comments were made. These are in the magazine in a short article.

At ‘QL is 25’ a short questionnaire was circulated regarding a member’s suggestion that the QUANTA magazine should cease independent publication and be replaced by a QUANTA section in QL Today. The same questionnaire was published in the magazine and on the QUANTA Website. A total of twenty six people responded of which twenty three were QUANTA members. The suggestion of a combined magazine was rejected 21 to 2 with 1 don’t know. UK Qlers were unwilling to pay additional subscription for the combined magazine by 12 to 8 whereas EU members were willing to pay. Twenty people wished to continue with 6 issues per year, two preferred 4 issues and two preferred 12 issues. There was an equal division as to size between A4 and A5 as people did not appreciate the difference in postage charges dependent on size. In the light of these results, QUANTA magazine will remain an independent member’s only publication with 6 issues per year.

The projects for the Committee this year 2010/2011 are to continue improving the Website and to increase the content. One area to be tackled is to make archived magazines from 1984 onwards available. The most recent years will be the easiest as they are already in PDF format, but earlier issues will have to be photographed initially and later OCR’d and proofread before entry onto the Website.

I look forward to another year of improvement to the service supplied to our members.

Finally I should like to thank John Gilpin who this year has had to resign as Treasurer and Committee member having completed more that six years on the Committee and three years as Treasurer. He has made an excellent Treasurer and Membership Secretary and will be missed by the rest of the Committee

SECRETARY’S NOTES Alison Southern

The committee has not met since February but work has been continuing on the website.

Thank you to everyone who has completed the survey, it will be very helpful. We are looking forwards to building a profile of a QUANTA user so we can move in the direction you want.

Thank you as well to everyone who sent in their voting or proxy forms for the AGM. Unlike the General Election we haven't got lots of candidates struggling to get your vote but we will listen to your views and act on them unlike the majority of MP's – and our expenses will be reasonable, no second homes funded by your money!

The committee may be a few members short at the AGM but we will be there in spirit if we can't make it in body.

Thank you for your support over the last year and I look forwards to another year as a committee member.

COMMITTEE MEETING PRÉCIS Sarah Gilpin

As is customary at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting Tony Hill, magazine editor and Dave Buckley, member, were welcomed onto the Committee. As there had been no nomination for Treasurer/Membership Secretary John Gilpin has been co-opted for one year only to continue in these posts. It is now a matter of urgency to find someone for these posts before 2011.

Responsibilities for maintaining the Website content, particularly for including the archived QUANTA magazines has been given to Dave Buckley and John Gilpin to push forward. The Editor will be looking to improve the quality of the EMAG while maintaining a high resolution printed magazine.

The Committee is to look for ways to improve the attendance at the AGM and associated workshops and would welcome any ideas from our members. Suggestions to date are 1) to revert to a two day workshop and 2) to consider joining with another group to widen the appeal. Any other suggestions by our members will be considered.

It was agreed that this year’s venue was suitable both for location and size and we have asked the BRC if we may possibly book again next year.

SUBGROUP SUPPORT

Sarah Gilpin

The QUANTA constitution does not have any specific directions regarding financial support for Subgroups. Over the years it has been accepted that Subgroups may apply for financial assistance towards the costs of their meeting place. Looking back through the accounts of previous years the Treasurer has been able to ascertain that some Subgroups have made requests for support. The support provided has been the annual costs applied for up to a maximum of £100.00 per year.

As Subgroups have reduced in numbers the requests have also reduced with venues being moved away from hiring a hall/room to meeting in a member's home or even in a convivial pub bar.

The question put to the members at the Annual General Meeting was: At what stage should QUANTA stop financial support to a Subgroup for the hire of a meeting place? A lively discussion took place. The costs of room hire have increased over the years and what would be a viable cost for a group of 30 was no longer viable for a group of 5. The question was asked as to whether all the regular attendees were members of QUANTA, and therefore paying subscriptions. Notably the Essex Subgroup folded when the hire of their meeting place was raised to £37.00 per meeting as there were insufficient members attending to justify the cost. It was agreed that this is a difficult decision as QUANTA does not wish to lose any more Subgroups and each request should be taken on its merits. Generally members felt that when numbers reduced below a viable number that meetings should be held in a member's home, even if this meant changing meeting place by arrangement through the year. But if the Subgroup wished to continue holding meetings in a hired room then that Subgroup should be prepared to pay the full costs.

Finally a proposal was made that: Support should be continued to Subgroups making a formal request on an individual basis to a maximum of £100.00 per year, but that where there are 5 members or less it should be strongly recommended that an alternative venue be chosen. It was also suggested that the names of the regular attendees should be given with the request. All members present voted for the above proposal. There were a total of 9 proxy votes, only 1 of which felt that support should be necessary.

As Chairman I should like to thank everyone for their points of view on this topic.

Sinclair QL Re-Releases

RWAP Services

We have been working hard to safeguard the future of the Sinclair QL through beginning to compile a repository of QL titles.

The repository enables people to see what software was produced for the Sinclair QL and also to be able to purchase working copies when their microdrive cartridges fail. Where we can. we obtain permission from the copyright holder to re-release items on the market.

This has enabled us to bring some of the titles back to the market as well as re-kindle interest in the Sinclair QL and its emulators.

Old favourites brought back to life include:

Jungle Eddi
The Lost Pharaoh
Pengi
Microdeal's Flight Simulator
Microdeal's QL Hopper
Microdeal's The King
Cuthbert in Space

We still retain our existing catalogue , including:

Open Golf
Stone Raider II
Hoverzone
Deathstrike
Flightdeck

All games are available on disk or for use with Q-emuLator on the PC for **ONLY £5 each.**

Microdrive versions also available - £10 each

Visit the QL Wiki for more details on software, books and hardware for the Sinclair QL:
www.rwapadventure.com/ql_wiki

RWAP Software
3 Dale View Court
Fulford
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST11 9BA
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Email: rich@rwapservices.co.uk
Website:
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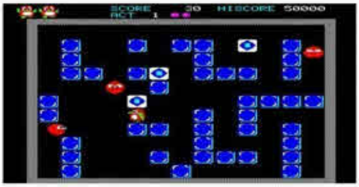
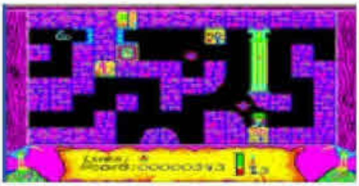
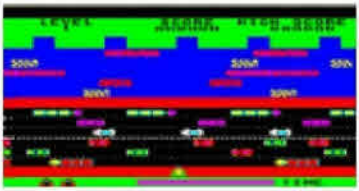


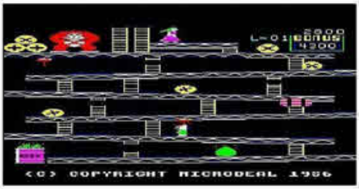
QL Pengi by Jochen Merz



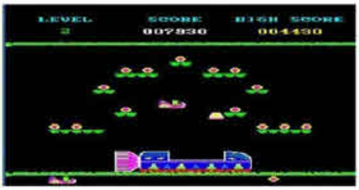
The Lost Pharaoh by Talent



QL Hopper by Microdeal



The King by Microdeal



Cuthbert in Space by Microdeal

Working to safeguard the QL for the future www.rwapsoftware.co.uk

QUANTA News

Magazine Editor John Gilpin / Tony Hill

From January 1st 2010 John Gilpin & Tony Hill have been working together to try to achieve a smooth transfer of Editorial Control of the QUANTA Magazine.

Tony has been working on developing the format of the Magazine - page by page - for Volume 26 Issue 6 Dec/Jan 2009, and NOW for Volume 27 Issue 1 Feb/Mar 2010, with a view to going solo for the Apr/May 2010 issue, while John, acting as mentor, has spent considerable time checking, correcting, advising and replying to all of the points that Tony is still learning.

In fact, John has written up exact instructions which has allowed Tony to continue to develop his skills in handling PagePlus (this is the Desktop Publishing program used to produce the PDF File for the Printers) and a gradual improvement is being seen.

As you will have seen the Magazine front cover has been completely re-designed based on a QUANTA Logo design competition going back to 2004. The inspiration for this came about from designs originally submitted by Javier Guerra, who hosts the Sinclair QL Spanish Resources web pages.

We will continue to develop the eMag and put it into the Members only section of the Website once that facility has been developed.

OBITUARY John Meadows

John Meadows died in February 2010 after several years of cancer related illness.

John was one of those who founded the Dorset Sub-Group the group in 1991.

He used his QL for many things and in particular for Family History research. He left a widow and several grown up children

The committee send their condolences to the family on their loss.

[Submitted by John Mason - QUANTA Subgroup - Dorset]

JOCHEN MERZ SOFTWARE

Kaiser-Wilhelm-Str. 302
47169 Duisburg, Germany

Fax +49 203 502012
EMail: SMSQ@J-M-S.com

J-M-S will be at the QL Meeting near Vienna
First weekend in June 2010

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QPC2 Version 3 - Upgrade from QPC2 Version 2		EUR 19,90
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SMSQ/E ATARI or (Super)GoldCard or QXL		EUR 39,90
QPC Print - printer emulation driver for QPC		EUR 39,90
Agenda Agenda program for WMAN and Prowess	[V1.09]	EUR 14,90
Suqcess Database front-end for WMAN	[V2.05]	EUR 19,90
QD2003 Pointer-Environment-Editor	[VB.01]	EUR 39,90
QD2003 Upgrade from QD98	[VB.01]	EUR 9,90
QD2003 Upgrade from previous versions	[VB.01]	EUR 19,90
QMAKE Pointer-driven MAKE for GST/Quanta Assembler	[V4.31]	EUR 14,90
BASIC Linker	[V1.21]	EUR 14,90
WINED Floppy/Harddisk Sector- & File-Editor	[V1.26]	EUR 14,90
FiFi II File-Finder - Extremely useful!	[V4.31]	EUR 14,90
FiFi II Upgrade from Fifi V1, 2 or 3	[V4.31]	EUR 9,90
EPROM Manager	[V3.02]	EUR 14,90
QSpread2003 Spreadsheet Program	[V4.04]	EUR 39,90
QSpread2003 Upgrade from QSpread2001	[V4.04]	EUR 9,90
QSpread2003 Upgrade from V1	[V4.04]	EUR 29,90
QPAC I Utility programs	[V1.11]	EUR 19,90
QPAC II Files, Jobs & other Things	[V1.45]	EUR 29,90
QTYP II Spell checker	[V2.17]	EUR 24,90
QPTR Pointer Toolkit	[V0.30]	EUR 39,90
DISA Interactive Disassembler	[V3.04]	EUR 29,90
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EasyPTR Version 4 - Upgrade from earlier versions	[V4]	EUR 39,90
text87plus4patch - now for QPC, QXL, Q40, Q60, Aurora		EUR 10,90
QDT - QL Desktop program		EUR 59,90
QMENU Version 8 - New! with new, printed Manual	[V8.02]	EUR 24,90
QMENU Version 8 - Update from earlier Versions, also with printed.manual		EUR 17,90
QMENU Version 8 - New/Update for QL Today subscribers, with prtd manual **ONLY**		EUR 14,90

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  by multiplying with 1.40) - no fee for US cheques in US$!

Cheques payable to Jochen Merz only!

Price list valid until 30th of June 2010

PHOTOS FROM THE HALL GREEN WORKSHOP & AGM

[Photos courtesy of Sarah Gilpin]

Whilst there was a shortage of members attending, there was no shortage of interest and entertainment throughout the day.

The venue was easy to get to, mind counting up to 1237 for the road number was a new experience. First time I got it wrong and somehow I was looking for 1273 not the best thing to do, but as looked left, I saw the sign for the community centre. Fortunately a road on the right allowed me to change direction easily and a few seconds later pulled into the forecourt.

The entrance to the QUANTA venue was clearly marked and on entering the the hall all was revealed.

Hall Green - The Main Hall

Having said my hello's I unpacked my gear from the car and acquired a table to put it on . Suddenly I was being asked for information on a number of things, then out of the blue John Gilpin said George Gwilt was about to give his presentation on 'Having fun with the QL' OK down tools grab my Laptop and off the the presentation room. It was a very

George Gwilt - 'Having fun with the QL'

The audience enjoying George Gwilt presenting - 'Having fun with the QL'

interesting display that ensued, where the marvels of Mandelbrot and other programs were explained. Having used the Wordweb spell checker for the correct spelling of Mandelbrot, all was revealed - Mandelbrot wasn't just a conjured up name but actually related to the French mathematician (born in Poland) noted for inventing fractals (born in 1924). Wow now I really am learning something. Never thought to look up Mandelbrot before.

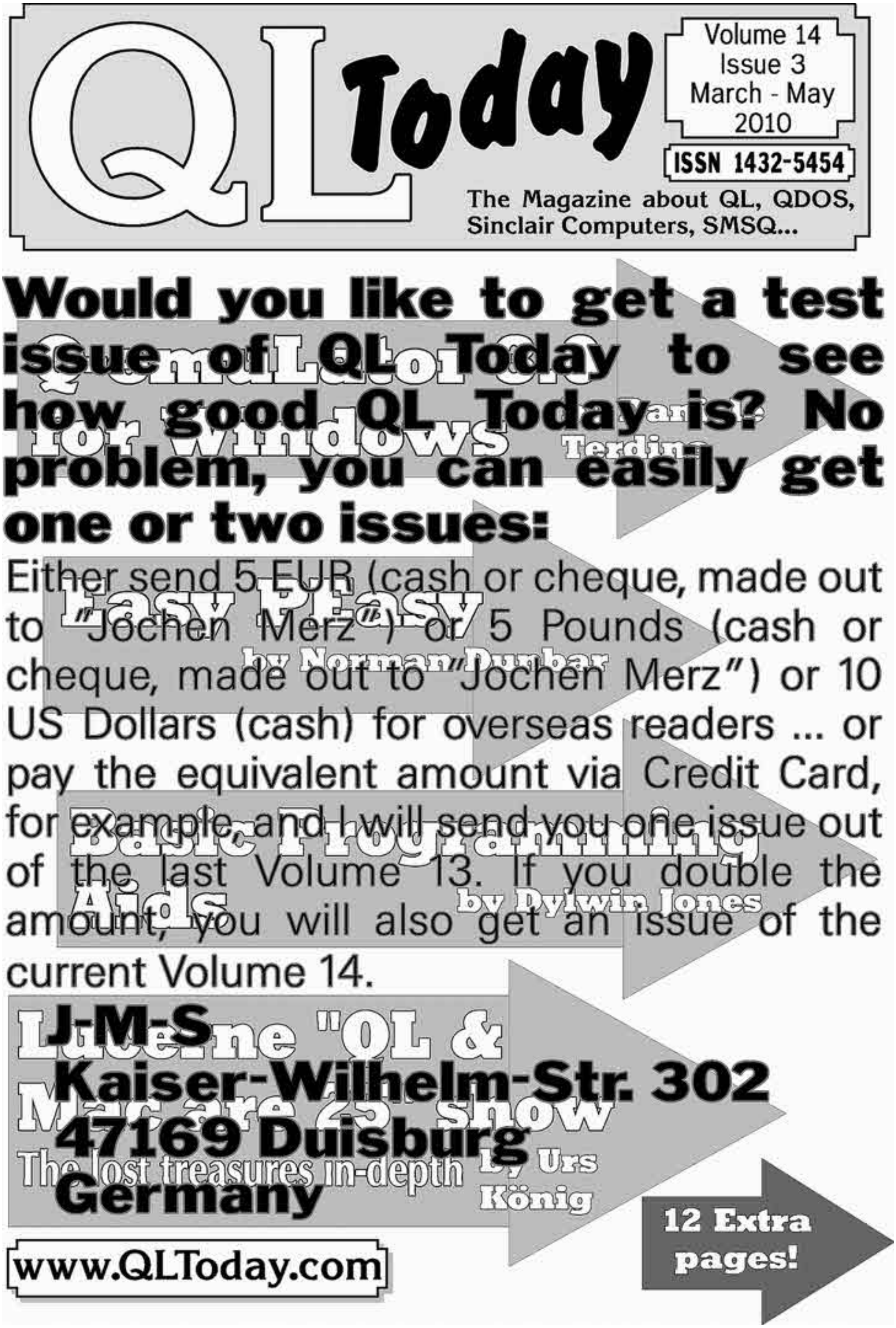
After George had completed his presentation, I asked if I could set up my computer and connect it to projector, something that I had NOT done before. I had had in mind that I would offer to do a presentation on the QL eUser Guide and the Hi Res QUANTA Magazine. I hadn't offered as I wasn't sure if the Projector would do what I wanted it to do. My fears were baseless and I was able to show how both of these files operated in PDF Format using Acrobat Reader.

Back to the Main Hall to have a look round. Plenty of Software and Hardware on display as can be seen in the following Picture.

Rwapsoftware's presentation

Everyone who was present at the Hall Green venue was very involved all day. It all went so quickly, I could not believe it was 3 pm and we were all sitting down to the Annual General meeting.

Then, get the all the stuff back in the car - join up with the committee for the Committee Meeting. Ten minutes they said; I'm sure it was longer than that. No matter, it had been a thoroughly entertaining day.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König
12 Extra
pages!

QL Today

Volume 14
Issue 3
March - May
2010

ISSN 1432-5454

The Magazine about QL, QDOS, Sinclair Computers, SMSQ...

Would you like to get a test issue of QL Today to see how good QL Today is? No problem, you can easily get one or two issues:

Either send 5 EUR (cash or cheque, made out to "Jochen Merz") or 5 Pounds (cash or cheque, made out to "Jochen Merz") or 10 US Dollars (cash) for overseas readers ... or pay the equivalent amount via Credit Card, for example, and I will send you one issue out of the last Volume 13. If you double the amount, you will also get an issue of the current Volume 14.

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www.QLToday.com

MORE PHOTOS FROM THE HALL GREEN WORKSHOP & AGM

[Photos courtesy of Geoff Wicks - Editor QL Today]

Sarah Gilpin

Our Chairman in complete concentration

John Gilpin, Sarah Gilpin and Keith Dunbar

Leading the discussion at the AGM

Alan Hunt &
Mike Bedford White

Sharing a Laugh prior to the AGM starting

The AGM has started and the members are deep in thought

George Gwilt
and Derek Stewart
deep in conversation

Rich Mellor and Tony Hill

In
Full concentration Mode.

Plenty to talk about.

Members deep in thought

.

Members

In

Reflective

Mode

THE TREASURER RETURNS John Gilpin

Just like the proverbial bad penny, I am delighted to tell you all that following the QUANTA Annual General Meeting at which I had to stand down from the Committee in accordance with the constitution (more than 6 years on the committee and more than three years as an officer), the new committee held a meeting and co-opted me back onto the committee for a period not exceeding twelve months.

I am delighted to be back even after being away for only about half an hour or so and I look forward to serving as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Everything is just as it was before, contact details etc have not changed and I will be most pleased to answer any questions related to either the financial matters of QUANTA or to any membership queries you may have.

This does mean however, that during the next twelve months, the QUANTA Committee have to find someone to take over from me as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. The task is not an onerous one with perhaps three busy periods in the year – the January subscription receipts, with many of them paid by standing order, the July subscription receipts and the December year end accounts and preparation for the Auditor. If you would like to take this job on, and you let me know early enough, I would be quite happy to provide any training required. Accountancy training is NOT Required although a sound knowledge of figures (Mathematics) would be advantageous. Don’t leave it right until the last minute. – I can’t be co-opted for another twelve months without at least one year’s break. Any queries to treasurer@quanta.org.uk.

Modulo Arithmetic Revisited George Gwilt

Steve Poole suggests that more should be said about the use of MOD and DIV than has appeared recently in QUANTA. So here goes.

First of all it may be useful to see what the primary use of these functions is. If you have a number of objects and want to divide them into a number of piles each of the same size you will usually find that there are a few left over - not enough to produce another pile. The functions DIV and MOD will tell you the number of piles you can make and the number of objects left over. Thus if you have 79 objects and want piles of size 13 you will find that the number of piles will be:

79 DIV 13 = 6

and the number of objects left over is:

79 MOD 13 = 1

You can see from this that A DIV B gives you the number of times B can be subtracted from A and that A MOD B gives the result of the last subtraction.

The definitions of these functions when A and B are positive integers could be:

A DIV B = INT(A/B)

A MOD B = A - B*INT(A/B)

Here INT(X) stands for the integral part of the positive number X.

All this is pretty obvious. However if A is a negative integer difficulties arise. First of all how can could you, for example, pick out 13 items from -79 items? The answer is, of course, that you can't. But that is no reason for not extending the definitions of DIV and MOD to cover negative values of A and B.

For example the factorial function, x!, can be defined for positive non zero integral values of x as;

x! = x*(x-1)*(x-2).....2*1

As you may recall a more general definition of this function is:

x! = the integral from 0 to infinity of u^x*e^-u with respect to u

For positive non zero values of x this gives exactly the same answers as the former definition but it extends the possibilities to other values of x.

So, in the case of DIV and MOD the definition has been extended for negative values of the arguments.

Unfortunately, however, there is not one unique unambiguous definition which is in general use.

The best I can come up with is:

A DIV B = RD(A/B)

A MOD B = A - B*(A DIV B)

Here RD(X) is the rounded value of X, where the rounding might be any of:

1 Rounded to plus infinity (rounded up)
2 Rounded to minus infinity (rounded down)
3 Rounded towards zero (rounded down for positive values and up for negative values)
4 Rounded to nearest (with exact halves going either way!)

Whichever way of rounding is used the sign of A MOD B will be either plus or minus. We could therefore define the sign of A MOD B to be one of plus and minus. The value of both A MOD B and A DIV B would then be determinate. A plus sign would mean that A DIV B had been rounded down and a minus sign would mean that A DIV B had been rounded up.

As it happens, there are over 50 high level programming languages which use the functions DIV and MOD. Of these over half set the sign of A MOD B equal to that of the dividend, A, and the remainder to that of the divisor B. Examples of the "dividend" languages are Visual Basic and Java. Examples of the other set are Perl and Microsoft Excel.

Fortran and Matlab, on the other hand, use both types. For Fortran "mod" uses the sign of dividend and "modulo" uses the other. For Matlab the names used are "mod" and "rem".

Assembler Languages

The integer units of both the Intel 486 and the Motorola 68000 series perform divisions giving a quotient and remainder. The remainder has the same sign as the dividend.

The FPU instructions for the Intel 486, FREM and FREM1, perform the MOD function on two floating point numbers. The first, FREM, rounds the result of the division to zero. The second, FREM1, rounds to nearest.

The equivalent FPU instructions for Motorola are FMOD (round to zero) and FREM (round to nearest).

For example:

FMOD(79.75, 4.2) = 4.15

FREM(79.75, 4.2) = -.05

The reason for these results is that 79.75/4.2, which is 18.9881, is rounded towards zero (18) by FMOD and to nearest by FREM (19). Multiplying these figures by 4.2 and subtracting the product from 79.75 gives the values quoted above.

SBASIC

What does SBASIC do with DIV and MOD? Well, the following:

```
 3 MOD  2 =  1
 3 MOD -2 = -1
-3 MOD  2 =  1
-3 MOD -1 = -1
```

show that SBASIC follows the "divisor" route.

Just for fun, here are a few more examples from SBASIC to try.

```
2.9 MOD  2
2.9 MOD -1.9
3.1 MOD  2.4
```

What odd results!

Finally

Steve Poole wondered if anyone used DIV and MOD with negative numbers. Here is one example. Suppose you want to know whether one integer will divide another with no remainder. This could be asked of any pair of integers of any sign. Whatever the definition used for DIV and MOD, the answer to the question will always be decided by the value of A MOD B, which will be zero if B divides A and non zero otherwise.

RANDOM DOODLES Steve Poole

Back in 1993 I spent quite some time doing graphics doodles, experimenting with the random number generator. Luckily, the QL has a very versatile RND() function which allows you to experiment easily, as it can accept a wide range of integer parameters.

I wrote many randomised routines and spent many hours watching, fascinated, by the often unexpected output produced. But it must be said that random graphics generally produce mere 'mush' on the screen, as statistically almost every pixel should be lit at least once, (like the random dot pattern that fills the QL screen when you turn it on and it does its random memory test).

So to get the random number generator to do something interesting, you must set limits to guide it. This can take hours to do, as generally the result is by definition chaotic. Little by little, you will be able to discover which parameters to use as limits, so as to increase the probability of producing interesting output. (About one design in five?).

So using random numbers is a process of discovery, where, like doodling, you don't know where you will end up. One day I decided to randomise a 'twirling baton' program to see what it would do, but at once realised that it needed simplifying and so only allowed the baton to bounce up and down on the screen, moving vertically one pixel at a time. (By fixing Scale at 255 units, lines are directly compatible with the QL window pixels). But the screen soon gets cluttered up, so to allow the pattern to continue I XORed everything by using OVER -1. This is equivalent to 'stirring' the pixels, especially where there are two different slope angles. Here we are only using a few parameters. Just imagine how complex chaos is in the real universe with its innumerable parameters!

To keep the baton-ends on-screen, SELect structures are used. If an end goes off-screen, the increment is inversed. Increments are chosen beforehand in the outer loop, the randomness simply causing different slopes to appear at different angles.

To use the program, just run it and watch. Sometimes the routine will first produce a complete mess, then go on to create a clear pattern, uncluttering the screen and so forth. Less often, it will draw patterns which interact and remain coherent. Allow three minutes per motif to see if there is any coherent repetition. When you want to begin a new motif, hit any key : except 'q' which will quit the program; 'p' which will print the parameters so you can record them for replay; or 's' which will toggle the speed between maximum and minimum. To create a replay, enter the printed parameters in DATA, and increment the 'last' variable. The next time you see a 'chaotic' image, just ask yourself how it got into such a state. Interesting experiments have been done by scientists: In certain circumstances, turbulence's can be rewound backwards to form a simple laminar structure! So Chaos is not as chaotic as it might appear...the underlying order is just not evident! At least we are only using straight lines and not curves.

The code uses FILL with two POINTs instead of line, as this produces very little difference in speed but much more flexibility for tweaking. Please feel free to experiment with the code. Turn the FILL off, and/or OVER too, if you so wish. Also try experimenting with the pre-set increments held in a$ to '1111', '1357' or whatever. The code works best when the random values are harmonics, that is, in phase with the edges so they then repeat back on themselves periodically. Save screens and print them if you like abstract modern art designs! If you find this program fascinating, try randomising any graphics program in your possession: You will be amazed what a little random XORing will do in a loop.

```
100 ::
110 REMark Doodle_bas S.Poole 7may93.
120  REMark for Quanta. Beta-test by B.Coativy.
130   CLEAR: RESTORE : OPEN#1,CON_16: WINDOW 512,256,0,0
140    BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 4: SCALE 255,0,0: INK 4
150     a$='1248': q=255: n=375: ps=1: ct=0: last=12: demo=1
160 REPeat main
170    ct=ct+1: IF ct>last: demo=0: BEEP 12345,6
180    CLS: y=0: i=1: x=RND(1 TO n): z=RND(1 TO n): ox=x: oz=z
190    a=RND(1 TO 4): a=a$(a): IF RND(1): a=-a
200    b=RND(1 TO 4): b=a$(b): IF RND(1): b=-b
210    IF demo: READ a,b,x,z: ox=x: oz=z
220    REPeat loop
230       y=y+i: SELect y: =0 TO q: =REMAINDER : i=-i
240       x=x+a: SELect x: =0 TO n: =REMAINDER : a=-a
250       z=z+b: SELect z: =0 TO n: =REMAINDER : b=-b
260       OVER -1: FILL 1: POINT x,y: POINT z,y: FILL 0: OVER 0
270       i$=INKEY$(#1,ps)
280       IF i$=='s': IF ps=0: ps=1: ELSE ps=0: END IF : i$=''
290      IF i$=='p': AT 0,0: PRINT a!b!ox!oz!: i$=INKEY$(#1,500): i$=''
300       IF i$=='q': EXIT main
310       IF i$<>'': EXIT loop
320     END REPeat loop
330 END REPeat main: CLS: STOP
340 :
345 DATA -8,-8,6,21
350 DATA 2,2,15,286, -2,-2,221,62, 1,-1,5,118, -8,8,230,258
355 DATA -2,-2,355,372, -4,4,36,168, 4,2,321,144, -8,-    8,6,21
357 DATA -8,-8,196,202, 1,-1,266,119, 4,4,125,50, 1,-5,302,233
360 ::
```

What you are in fact watching is the very process of creating order out of chaos!

Randomness can create very complex harmonic structures. There are an enormous number of possible motifs waiting to be discovered. (With just a little effort you could modify the program to produce a screen-saver, changing the motif periodically). If you have any interesting random routines of your own, why not let the Editor know? Happy Doodling, Steve Poole.

HELPLINE

Dilwyn Jones

Don't forget that you can send your help requests to the Quanta Helpline by email to helpline@quanta.org.uk or to the Helpline Coordinator (me) at my address printed inside the front cover of Quanta magazine. Another good source of help on QL-related matters is the QL-Users email mailing list - see the article in the December 2009/January 2010 issue of Quanta magazine for details of how to join and use the list.

Two topics this time, both of which arose from queries on the QL-Users mailing list.

Q. How can I check which DOS directory my QPC is executed from? Sometimes I run my QPC from a pen drive, sometimes from the PC's hard disk.

Tobias Fröschle suggested:

This is where my method QPC_EXEC "" comes in handy - It will just show you where QPC was started from - regardless of drive mapping.

Norman Dunbar suggested:

What I do is define DOS8_ to be the setting ./ (dot slash) which seems to work.

On Linux, under wine it needs to be changed from ./ and I use the directory selector button to navigate to the directory where I executed QPC from. In my case it is media/CRUCIAL/qpc3v33 which wine changes to something like c:\qpc3v33\.

Regardless, dir dos8_ gives a listing of the qpc directory and no doubt LET d$ = DOS_DRIVE$(8) would return the directory.

George Gwilt remarked that the QPC_EXEC "" method was "an excellent idea which certainly works. I have never used QPC_EXEC before."

So the discussion then moved on to what you could do with the QPC_EXEC command on QPC2.

QPC_EXEC can be used to start many PC programs, without having to exit QPC and so on.

Have a look at the article "Taking advantage of Windows" in QL Today volume 13 issue 1 page 41 (September to November 2008). It shows how to make good use of QPC_EXEC to start Windows programs from within QPC. You can even define HOT_CMD hotkeys with QPC_EXEC commands to start PC programs using QL hotkeys!

I find this really useful for little jobs I can't (yet) do from QPC, like firing up Windows Media Player to play my favourite MP3 music files, for example. Most Windows programs have command line switch facilities so you can pass filenames to them and so on.

```
QPC_EXEC "wmplayer.exe","path_filename.mp3"
```

Need to browse a particular website (plug plug!):

```
QPC_EXEC "c:\program files\windows explorer\iexplore.exe",
                "http:\\www.dilwyn.me.uk\index.html"
```

The more you start to play with QPC_EXEC the more you realise you can achieve!

Your project now is to write a little QL program to control your PC!

Marcel Kilgus kindly reminded me that you don't have always have to specify the Windows program to use, as the defaults system might start the correct program associated with the file for you, rather like the File Info II system on QDOS or SMSQ systems. For example, you can pass just a URL to Windows using QPC_EXEC and it will automatically load it using the default browser on your system:

```
QPC_EXEC "http:\\www.dilwyn.me.uk\index.html"
```

will work, too, and start the default browser (e.g. Opera in my case), which might be preferable and does not rely on a hard-coded path. Same with

```
QPC_EXEC "path_filename.mp3"
```

Which would start the associated MP3 file player.

Where all this becomes really exciting is using QL hotkeys to fire up Windows programs, minimising the time taken to switch from QPC to Windows, finding the program in the START menu and so on:

```
ERTHOT_CMD("w",'QPC_EXEC

"http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/gen/qlnet/qlnet.html"'
```

(Please note the use of mixed double and single quote marks within that command - in particular, the command ends with double quote and single quote in that order before the closing bracket).

This starts up your Windows browser, at my "Links to QL websites" page from where you can select whichever QL website you'd like to visit! Quick and simple, with no intervening Windows keystrokes!

When it comes to music, you could probably write a little SBASIC program with filenames of your favourite MP3 music files, held as Windows paths and filenames in DATA statement, write a short menu to select these filenames and pick and play your music files (or even playlists if you know where Windows stores them and their filenames) without ever having to leave QPC!

Here's an over-simplified program you can start as an SBASIC job and leave it running to select songs as you go along:

```
100 REMark MP3 selector (works only on QPC2!)
110 DIM song$(20,40)
120 RESTORE
130 no% = 0
140 REPeat
150   IF EOF:EXIT
160   READ song$(no%)
170   no% = no%+1
180 END REPeat
190 :
200 REMark display as a menu
210 CLS : CLS #0
220 FOR a = 1 TO no% : PRINT a TO 3;song$(a-1)
230 REPeat
240   INPUT #0,'Enter number of song to play > ';song_no%
```

```
250   IF song_no% = 0 THEN EXIT
260   IF song_no% <= no% THEN QPC_EXEC song$(song_no%)
270 END REPeat
280 :
290 PRINT #0,'Program Finished.'
300 STOP
310 :
320 DATA 'C:\music\song1.mp3'
330 DATA 'C:\music\song2.mp3'
340 DATA 'C:\music\song3.mp3'
350 DATA 'C:\music\song4.mp3'
360 DATA 'C:\music\song5.mp3'
```

Q. Does anyone know of any standard floppy disk imaging software for the QL - to make a single file on the PC for example, which would be the equivalent of a floppy disk which all emulators could read / write to ? Might be an interesting little project if anyone is interested.

Dave Walker replied:

Why not just use the venerable rawread/rawrite programs on the PC side that do sector imaging into a file? It would be easy enough to do one that runs on the QL side but is there really a need for it? Somewhere I even have a driver for the PC side that allows such an image to be attached as though it was a real floppy.

Dave mentioned Rawread/Rawrite - get this from

http://www.pamarsystems.com/raw.html

guess a simple web search for 'rawtext sources' might find some other sources too.

There's also an article from Tim Swenson about Rawread/Rawrite from a QL file transfer angle on my website at

http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/gen/pcqlxfer/raw.html

Rich then followed up with another suggestion:

Which emulators can use a qxl.win file maybe we just need a smaller subset of this which would be floppy disk size? Can someone please share the details of this format?

A QXL.WIN file is a filing system used as a container for QL files in another operating system's filing system. For example, under Windows, a QL emulator can "isolate" its files from the Windows one by placing the files all in a single large Windows file called a QXL.WIN. Some emulators will even allow you to change the name "QXL.WIN" if you prefer, or wish to have more than one.

As far as emulators are concerned, the following can handle QXL.WIN directly:

QPC1, QPC2, QXL, QemuLator for Windows (not the Apple Mac version though), uQLx for Linux, don't know about the Windows/Mac versions.

Various systems like Q40/Q60 can handle QXL.WIN via extra software like QCDEZE and Wolfgang Lenerz's QXLWIN programs.

QLay/QL2K can apparently extract files from QXL.WIN via their tools programs, but I have never tried it.

Qubide I think can if you have Thierry's Atapi/IDE drivers and possibly QCDEZE.

Information about the QXLWIN file format can be obtained from http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/docs/formats/index.html

It is, in theory at least, possible to use QXL.WIN from a floppy disk, although as a QXL.WIN has to be at least 1MB in size, it could not be used on a DSDD 720KB disk for example.

Norman Dunbar suggested we go to http://qdosmsq.dunbar-it.co.uk and there is a section on QL file systems. He has documented the QXL/QPC "hard disk" and floppy disk formats there. When on his site, click on the qdosmsq link in the index on the left, then fs (filing systems) and then start and choose the section you are interested in.

The direct link to the article about "QLWA" hard disk filing systems itself is:

http://qdosmsq.dunbar-it.co.uk/doku.php?id=qdosmsq:fs:qlwa

AUDITOR'S REPORT 2009

John Gilpin

Once again, the Treasurer's report together with the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2009 had to be based upon unaudited figures.

Since we lost our Auditor Cath Banks a couple of years ago, it has been very difficult to replace her and Liz Armstrong has stepped into the breach but is only able to audit our accounts in her spare time if she is to charge us the extremely low rate that Cath did. While we are very grateful to Liz for this service, it does mean that in order to get the accounts into the magazine with all the other AGM reports and papers, I have to rely upon my own judgement until I get her report.

In the past I am proud to say that the audited figures for the QUANTA Accounts have never differed from my pre audit figures by more than a couple of pounds (the results of rounding) and both Cath and Liz have been happy to accept the figures published in the magazine and adjustments (where necessary) have been made in the following year's figures.

2009 figures are no different to any of the previous ones and Liz's only comment this year has been to point out that whereas I have written off the £8 representing £1 for each of 8 items of Fixed Assets against the I & E (P & L) account, it may have been more accurate (in accounting terms) to have written this amount off as an overhead (written off Assets). Liz goes on to report that since the bottom line of the accounts is not affected in any way by this technical error, she is, once again, happy to accept the figures published in the magazine as acceptable since the net result of this can only be to make about £1 of difference to our taxation for the year.

I am, once again, grateful for Liz's time and expertise especially when it is known that she completed our audit from her sick bed after an operation on her tonsils – a very painful operation for an adult – and I will be pleased to propose a vote of thanks to her at the AGM in April.

I am assured that the QUANTA Accounts are in a steady state to be passed over to whoever takes my place after the AGM in 2010.

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Welcome

Quo Vadis Design sells software for the Sinclair Quantum Leap computer (QL) and variants including a new O/S called SMSQE.

The QL is a computer in its 25th year Anniversary.

Software emulations of the QL now exist which can run on a PC/Mac with Windows/Linux or Mac Operating systems.

News

QVD QL News Blog - keep up to date
News Blog
24/02/2009

Quo Vadis Design Website Launched
01/02/2009

FEATURED PRODUCT

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Tony Tebby puts forward his view of the development in computing over the past 25 years in the latest issue of QLToday

Check the QL News Blog on our website for updates. www.ql-qvd.com/blog

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SINCLAIR QL's 25th ANNIVERSARY YEAR IN RETROSPECT – PART 2

Urs Koenig

[Here is Urs second part of a three part article which continues to give us a fascinating look back over the anniversary year - Ed]

Part 2 of the story covers the first half year of 2009 starting Monday January 12th 7:00 am!

Spreading the word

Just after breakfast I fired up two of my notebooks to spread the word over the internet. The text had been well prepared and tailored for different audiences by late Sunday evening. Two email accounts were used for the job, my personal Bluewin (No 1 Swiss provider) account and the newly opened Google account **Sinclair QL 25th anniversary** [sinclairql25@gmail.com]. I decided to use Gmail and the Google cloud applications (calendar, groupware, groups, map, photo gallery, etc.) to learn its features and possibilities.

25th Anniversary
12.1.1984 - 2009

First, I had to upload the prepared HTML pages to my **QLvsJAGUAR** website. Then the PowerPoint anniversary presentation - **A story of what it takes to innovate...** and the QPC2 demo package had to be deployed on my cowo.ch domain for download. Having done this the web was updated and ready. Next the post to the **ql-users** mailing list was the last action on notebook one.

The second notebook in the living room was used to post to the so called **QL VIP**, a hand selected list of 1st generation QL personalities.
I posted not only the Sinclair, QL and Retro computing scene as the years before (I'm posting the QL launch anniversary for several years already) but also a carefully selected number of ICT industry seniors, experts and media. This included Personal Computer World (PCW for short) and computer technik (c't) magazines in Britain and Germany.

The QL VIP list consists of many members of the original QL design team including Jan Jones, David Karlin, Rick Dickinson and Tony Tebby among others. In addition important first hour QLers like Andrew Pennell, Silicon Valley industry senior Tim Bucher and Linus Torvalds were posted. Andy who wrote articles, books and software for the QL has been with Microsoft in the US for many years. Tim's story would make a great book. Just one thought here, without him there would be no iPhone as we know it today. Linus, a Finnish QL hacker between 1986 and 1991, is most famous for having initiated the development of the Linux kernel. All in all some 50 persons got a personal email with what was also published on the **25th anniversary webpage**. This was all done using Gmail. Next, twenty-seven selected NewsGroups were posted using the now defunct Swisscom Bluewin newsserver. (OT: Swisscom switched off their newsserver without telling its customers (millions). On calling them they told me that only 20 people were still using it. As it seams Twitter and Facebook are about to kill the NewsNet.) You can still find those postings on **groups.google.com.** Search for **SINCLAIR QL's 25th birthday.**

Thirty minutes later, all was done and I was heading for the office which is a 20 minutes drive. I thought that that was it, and did not expect something big to happen.

I have to say at this point, that early last year, I did not have a webtraffic statistics tool. All I had were plain webserver log files on QLvsJAGUAR and an additional somehow crude web front end statistic on cowo. Usually I only knew what was going on (access and traffic wise) the next day.

In the office it was the usual busy day, time was flying and I had no thoughts on the QL story until lunch. A quick look at the Gmail account showed that my email to Linus Torvalds had been rejected as unknown account, arghhh. It was nice to see that Jan Jones and Tony Tebby responded. At least the Sinclair Research QL firmware crew seemed to remember.

Back home that evening, I checked the feedback on ql-users and the NewsGroups of which **comp.sys.sinclair** was the busiest. Nice replies, but no big rush, as expected. This proved that the QL is history and perhaps birthday may not be the best word to describe something which died 23 years ago. Nevertheless, I decided to search for the valid email address of Linus (which was not that easy) and then reposted to him.

Finally, we sat down to dinner and ended the day with a thoroughly enjoyable family evening.

The cluster bomb effect

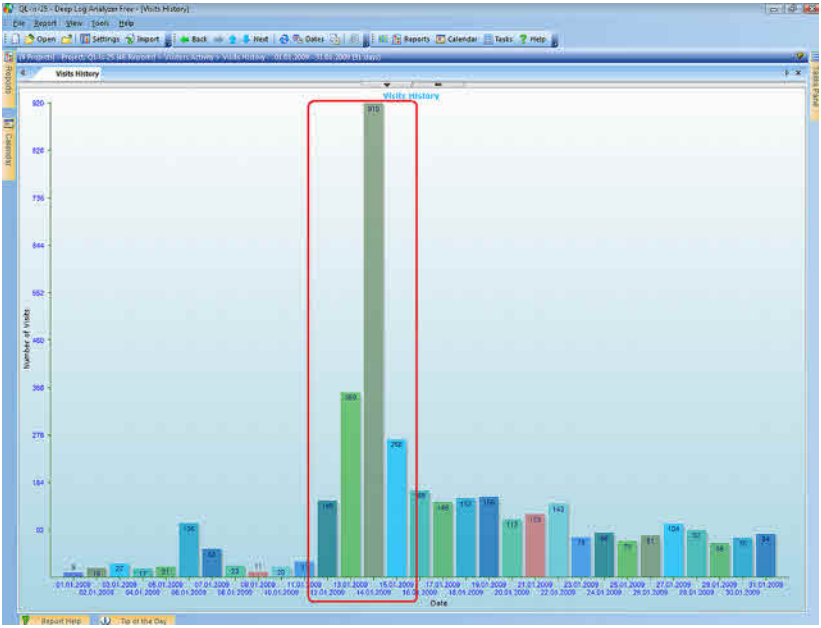
The next day (Tuesday Jan 13th) I had to be in the office early as we had some serious and ongoing crises with a major customer. It was 9 o'clock in the morning when our marketing director entered my office, telling me that he had been notified by **Google Alerts** about the **SINCLAIR QL's 25th birthday** and the fact that **PCW** had taken up the line and blogged the story. Aha, at least someone seems to remember the milestone that was the QL. Clive Akass, PCW's blogger, just did a cut & paste of my text, more or less. He even messed up a few things. Back home that evening I checked my Bluewin email accounts. It was nice to see that Andy Pennell had responded already on Monday just after I had shutdown my notebook for the day.

Andy had notified me that he had set up a quick blog post on **MSDN** about the QL anniversary. So in fact, he was the first not PCW. More personal responses from QL VIP came in that evening which showed that it was not only TT and JJ - who remember. Topics: Will there be a reunion of the crew who worked on the QL in 1982-1984? What was your alcohol level before, at and after the launch press conference. Do you remember how “everyone was in total awe of the Sinclair Illuminati! And all this, years ahead of MacWorld”.

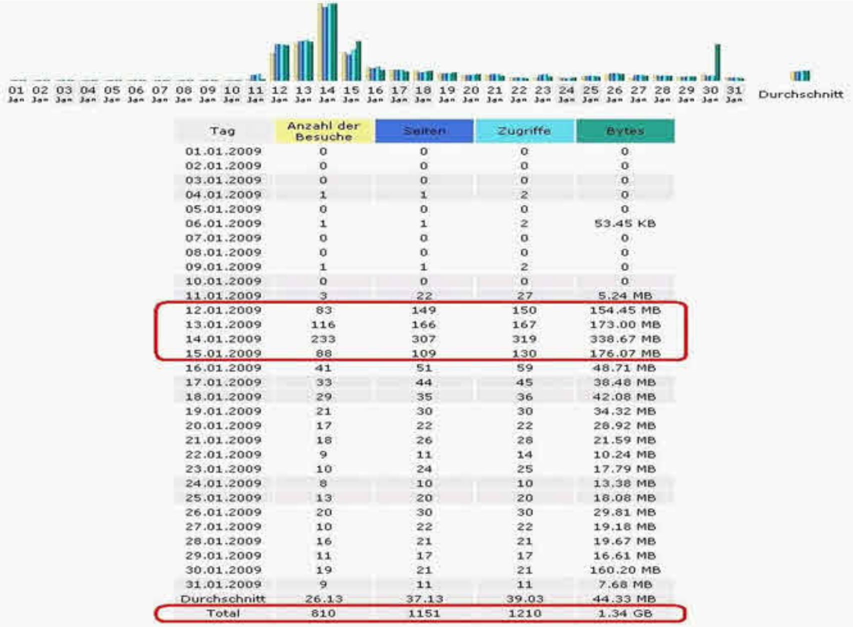
Just for the record: Google's **Alert** service posted PCW's blog update at 2:34am to everyone who had a matching subscription. Matching subscriptions are based on expressions one sets up for monitoring. This is very powerful as everything that Google grabs on popular websites forces an alert. Our marketing guys subscription is PC-WARE, our company name. This word was part of the Clive Akass posting.

For the rest of the week, the problems at work continued and all my efforts went into my work. It was Friday night when I first checked access and traffic on my websites and… wow, I was highly impressed with what I saw!

Visits on my QLvsJAGUAR site in January 2009 are depicted in the next picture, followed by Access and traffic on my cowo.ch/downloads site in January 2009 in the second picture.


QL-is-25 - Deep Log Analyzer Free - [Visits History]
File Report View Tools Help
Open Settings Import Back Next Dates Reports Calendar Tasks Help
Reports
Calendar
Visits History
Visits History
Number of visits
920
828
736
644
552
460
368
276
184
92
910
369
262
Date
Report Help
Tip of the Day

Visits on my QLvsJAGUAR site in January 2009.


01 Jan
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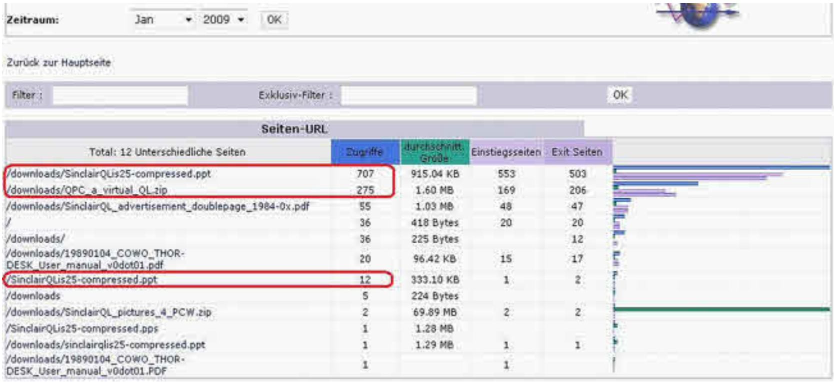
31 Jan
Durchschnitt

Tag	Anzahl der Besuche	Seiten	Zugriffe	Bytes
01.01.2009	0	0	0	0
02.01.2009	0	0	0	0
03.01.2009	0	0	0	0
04.01.2009	1	1	2	0
05.01.2009	0	0	0	0
06.01.2009	1	1	2	53.45 KB
07.01.2009	0	0	0	0
08.01.2009	0	0	0	0
09.01.2009	1	1	2	0
10.01.2009	0	0	0	0
11.01.2009	3	22	27	5.24 MB
12.01.2009	83	149	150	154.45 MB
13.01.2009	116	166	167	173.00 MB
14.01.2009	233	307	319	338.67 MB
15.01.2009	88	109	130	176.07 MB
16.01.2009	41	51	59	48.71 MB
17.01.2009	33	44	45	38.48 MB
18.01.2009	29	35	36	42.08 MB
19.01.2009	21	30	30	34.32 MB
20.01.2009	17	22	22	28.92 MB
21.01.2009	18	26	28	21.59 MB
22.01.2009	9	11	14	10.24 MB
23.01.2009	10	24	25	17.79 MB
24.01.2009	8	10	10	13.38 MB
25.01.2009	13	20	20	18.08 MB
26.01.2009	20	30	30	29.81 MB
27.01.2009	10	22	22	19.18 MB
28.01.2009	16	21	21	19.67 MB
29.01.2009	11	17	17	16.61 MB
30.01.2009	19	21	21	160.20 MB
31.01.2009	9	11	11	7.68 MB
Durchschnitt	26.13	37.13	39.03	44.33 MB
Total	810	1151	1210	1.34 GB

Access and traffic on my cowo.ch/downloads site in January 2009.



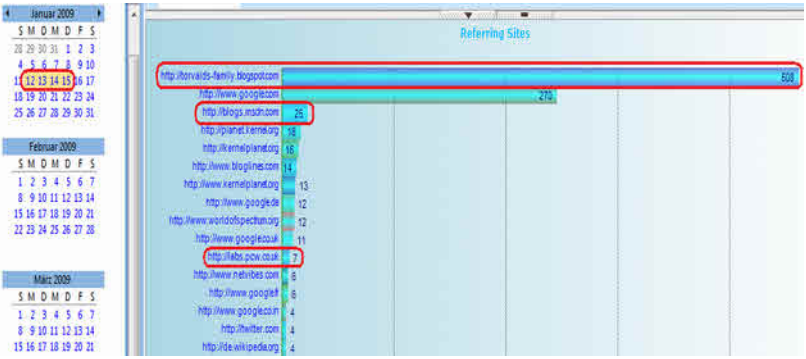
Seiten-URL

Total: 12 Unterschiedliche Seiten	Zugriffe	durchschnitt. Größe	Einstiegsseiten	Exit Seiten
/downloads/SinclairQLis25-compressed.ppt	707	915.04 KB	553	503
/downloads/QPC_a_virtual_QL.zip	275	1.60 MB	169	206
/downloads/SinclairQL_advertisement_doublepage_1984-0x.pdf	55	1.03 MB	48	47
/	36	418 Bytes	20	20
/downloads/	36	225 Bytes		12
/downloads/19890104_COWO_THOR-DESK_User_manual_v0dot01.pdf	20	96.42 KB	15	17
/SinclairQLis25-compressed.ppt	12	333.10 KB	1	2
/downloads	5	224 Bytes		
/downloads/SinclairQL_pictures_4_PCW.zip	2	69.89 MB	2	2
/SinclairQLis25-compressed.pps	1	1.28 MB		
/downloads/sinclairqlis25-compressed.ppt	1	1.29 MB	1	1
/downloads/19890104_COWO_THOR-DESK_User_manual_v0dot01.PDF	1		1	

Download counts on my cowo.ch/downloads site in January 2009.

BTW: Hits from regions like Redmond or Silicon Valley are counted as January 11th due to time zone differences to Switzerland.

What happened? Was it my posting to News Groups or individuals? Or was it the blogging of Andy or PCW? No it was someone else. It was **Linus Torvalds** who blogged his QL story and gave the QL-is-25 message an important push.



Linus Torvalds blog on the QL pushed the story and gave many direct hits to the anniversary web page.

So, QL-wise I was more than happy with the week. The message had been spread much wider than expected (almost like a cluster bomb) and I have received a lot of positive comments and feedback. So for me it was worth the time and effort. I assumed that traffic on my sites would now decline rapidly and the QL story will go back to dust.

TV and print media

Germany's **c't** magazine (Issue 3/2009, page 24) took up the line and mentioned the QL's 25th anniversary on their regular "Prozessorgeflüster" (CPU rumors). Andreas Stiller was one of the media guys which had been mailed on Jan 12th.

On Jan 21st, Paul contacted me on **YouTube**, asking for QL picture and video footage. He said that they are about to produce a drama/documentary about Sinclair for the BBC. **Wow, the QL story on BBC TV!** Later in the year this became known as **Syntax Era**, then **Micro Men** to be first broadcast, autumn - 2009.

Some days later, Clive Akass, Associate Editor (News) of **PCW**, contacted me and asked for QL pictures. He informed me that they will have an interview with David Karlin in the next edition. **Wow, the QL anniversary in the PCW magazine!** From then on I had contact with Kelvyn Taylor, Editor of PCW until PCW magazine was forced to close down in summer 2009. Kelvyn was one of the media guys which were mailed on Jan 12th.

So, PCW had a huge QL coverage in their April 2009 issue (Vol. 32 No. 4) which went on sale February 19th 2009:

- Editorial of Kelvyn Taylor on page 7,
- Anniversary article including interview with David Karlin and "QL vs Mac" comparison on pages 14 and 15
- and as a goody, the full reprint of the QL benchtest from the June 1984 issue (Vol. 7 No. 6) on pages 53 to 60.

I can hardly remember such a massive coverage (11 pages) on the QL in a main street publication - ever.

PCW did continue with their retro section in the May 2009 issue with the Apple Mac. They had overwhelmingly positive response to the start of the retro section with the QL (April issue).

In their June 2009 issue the QL had its third – this time small - 2009 coverage in PCW.

The firmware bugs myths

It was Jochen Merz who contacted me mid-March telling me that the JM ROM was produced before April 1984 and first QL's (end April 1984 onwards) were shipped with old firmware on EPROM, even though the final ROMs were available. The following weeks & months I had several email conversations with Tony Tebby, Jochen and others. The final story was not about physical ROMs but about the firmware (code) itself, which indeed was ready in its final form when the first QL's were shipped. The full story by Tony Tebby was then printed in QL Today V14 I1 (September 2009) and V14 I2 (December 2009).

It was mid April and therefore 4 months after the initial anniversary message. I was unable to attend QUANTA AGM and QL-is-25 workshop due to family reasons. My only QL tinkering in April/May was fiddling with **UQLX** under KNOPPIX (Linux on my PC) and with the GST **68K/OS** add-on card for the QL that Marcel Kilgus sent me by snail mail.

However, there is still another 25th anniversary **highlight** to come ......
Wanna know how these other highlights evolved ? > Part 3

Lucerne, April 9th 2010
Urs König

The anniversary web page holds the "message", the presentation, the QPC2 demo package, a selection of prominent feedback's received and links to all blogs and many other QL anniversary resources.

The URL is: http://tinyurl.com/ql-is-25

International QL Meeting In Austria

Gerhard Plavec

This event will be held in Prottes, Austria from **Thursday 3rd to Sunday 6th of June**. Prottes is about 30km east of Vienna, and the meeting will be held at Hauptstrasse 13, near the church.

The meeting is organised by Gerhard Plavec, who has set up a web page at http://kuel.org with information about the event in English, German and French.

This website also has details of places to stay, how to get to the venue and sightseeing suggestions.

Travel Details:

By car (30 km to the east of Vienna) B8 to Gänserndorf, then 5 km to Prottes.

By train to Vienna then U-Bahn or S-Bahn (changing in Florisdorf and Gänserndorf). Train information site at http://oebb.at/ in German and English.

By plane to Schwechat (airport in Vienna) then S-Bahn (changing in Florisdorf and Gänserndorf) or plane to Bratislava, then train Bratislava-Gänserndorf and transit to Prottes.

By ship on the Danube down from Germany or up from Hungaria or Bratislava to Vienna, then by train or rent a car.

Accommodation

In Prottes, there are only some restaurants and Heurige.

There are some Hotels in Gänserndorf (5 km), Angern (8 km), Strasshof and Deutsch Wagram (on the road to Vienna) and of course a lot in Vienna.

Some Guests (with sleeping bag) and some others (with camping tent) can stay here - please first contact Gerhard by email at gerhard,plavec@gmx.at or by telephone on +43 699 8185 6765. There is also a link on the website where you can enter your name and the days you are likely to attend. This page shows that (at the time of writing, mid-April) a number of people have already indicated that they hope to attend. A number of well-known QL personalities are likely to attend, including Jochen Merz, Tony Tebby, Marcel Kilgus, Tony Firshman and Urs König, for example.

Motor homes can get an electricity connection, by arrangement with Gerhard.

Provisional Events List

All 4 days : exhibition with QLs, extensions and applications, Amigas, Ataris,

Macs and PC running QL-emulations.

The following list may be subject to change:

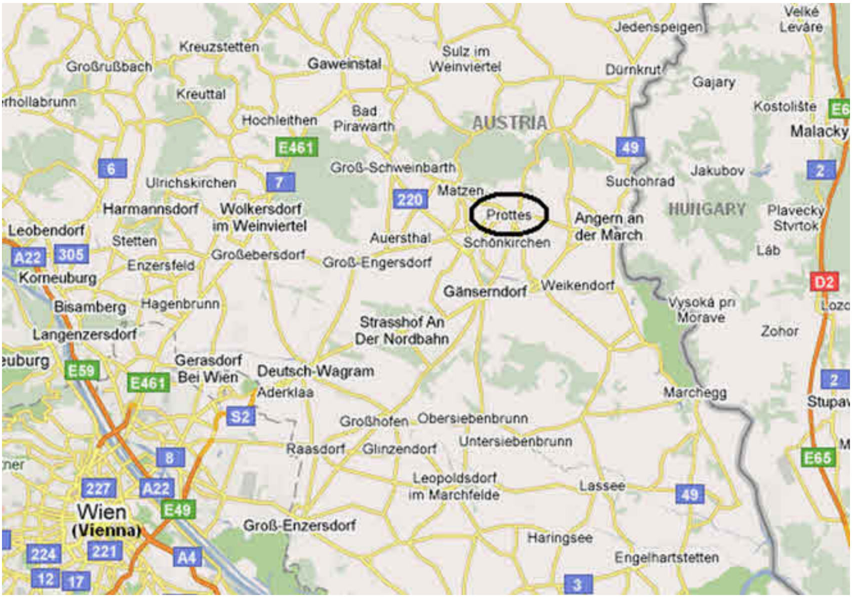
Thursday and Friday : workshops and talks about the QL - some sightseeing can be organized if wished (contact Gerhard).

Saturday: the main day with the most visitors

Sunday: visit the steam engine museum in Strasshof.

Further Information

Further information about travel, accommodation and so on at the Austrian tourism websites, such as http://www.austria.info/uk or http://www.austriatourism.com/xxl/_site/uk/home.html


Prottes
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
Wien
(Vienna)
Strasshof An Der Nordbahn
Gänserndorf
Schönkirchen
Matzen
Deutsch-Wagram
Marchegg

Prottes is the venue location

QUANTA NEWS Dilwyn Jones

Lear PCB Cad 7.11

Malcolm Lear continues to update his PCB CAD program, with the latest version being 7.11 at the time of writing. The current versions can be pointer driven, and what with the program development currently being considered stable, the older non-pointer versions have been discontinued.

Here's a list of changes since the last version reported:

7.10	Drill size file loading format checks (only very old files). Number of drill holes added to the auto gerber report file. When switching between project and library the file name is now shown. Corrected error in colour mask (cyan is now cyan not yellow). Save changes option now pops up when clearing memory.
7.11	Discrete and SMD libraries updated.

News From Urs König

It has been a while since aftermath I of the show. Well, the show photos (320 pictures) are online since months now but in good old Sinclair manner it took longer than estimated to complete the aftershow-webpage. But it’s ready now. Highlight of the recent QLvsJAGUAR website update is the QL-Mac-Show page which holds now all presentations of the various sessions in both Microsoft PowerPoint (PPT) and Adobe Acrobat (PDF) formats. In addition you can watch related videos on YouTube. URL is:

http://tinyurl.com/ql-mac-show

Don't forget the have another look at Linus Torvalds (the creator of the Linux kernel) GMOVE software blitter for the QL on the QL-is-25 webpage. URL is:

http://tinyurl.com/ql-is-25

If you're interested in more audio/visual QL resources you may try out one of these URLs:

http://tinyurl.com/ql-story
http://tinyurl.com/ql-pics
http://tinyurl.com/ql-videos

QL WIKI Updated

Rich Mellor writes:

Thanks to Dilwyn Jones, we have now completed a major update to the information on the hardware side to the Sinclair QL Wiki with pictures of most items.

We welcome further contributions to the wiki from the rest of the QL community - maybe this is something that Quanta could usefully promote to its members as a task?

If anyone has any details of further hardware items or spots any errors / omissions, please do get in touch.

The Wiki is (of course) at:

http://www.rwapadventures.com/ql_wiki

QemuLator News

Readers of this news column will know that Daniele Terdina has been working on a version of QemuLator for OS/X. Daniele has also stated that he is now working on a major upgrade to the Windows version as well. This will be the first significant update to the emulator since early 2009.

You can see a two page article by Daniele about this upgrade in the March-May 2010 issue of QL Today, starting on page 9.

A quick summary of the changes under consideration:

Resizable main window even when not in full screen mode

"QL speed" mode will now be more accurate, within about 5% of QL speed on all systems

New display filter to cut down on "chunkiness" of QL graphics on larger monitors

Ability to mount ".zip" files as read-only QemuLator drives

New QLPAK file format allowing QL binaries etc to be combined into a single file with emulator settings allowing them to be stored on and run from Windows hard disks and probably in time direct from website links

Enhanced microdrive file system will allow QLay emulator .mdv files to be used along with special microdrive images created on a real QL

New printing system allows SER1 Epson-style printing (as on a QL) to be redirected and converted to printers installed on PC
New "Sampled Sound System" compatible with similar devices on existing QDOS systems

The above is just a sample - see the author's own article in QL Today for further details.

QL Monitors

A QL user reported on the QL-Users mailing list in March that Microvitec were still able to supply some refurbished CUB monitors, such as the original black CUB monitor for the QL. This could be useful information for those still using an original "black box" QL as TTL-input video monitors are harder and harder to get hold of these days.

Here's a quote from the email concerned:

"...the only thing missing was a decent display, after a bit of digging around I thought I would email Microvitec (sales@microvitec.co.uk) to ask them about the TTL compatible LCD units they have.

"Bad news: these go for over a grand.

"Good news: they still have a number of refurbished CUB monitors. I got one of the original QL specific ones which is working perfectly for £60. I couldn't afford one of these when I was young(er) so that made my day."

Malcolm Cadman of the London QL group also reported that he had a few such monitors available to sell to anyone in his area wanting one.

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Further details from the Membership Secretary

John Gilpin, 181, Urmston Lane,
Stretford, Manchester, M32 9EH (UK).
Tel. +44 (0) 161 865 2872

Email:membership@quanta.org.uk

Visit the QUANTA Web Site
http://www.quanta.org.uk

SUBGROUP MEETINGS

THE WEST MIDLANDS QL USER GROUP

There has been a change of venue, brought about by the owners of the Queens Head pub changing it from a straight pub into an eatery. The new meeting place is called the Bull, the address is 1 Price Street, Birmingham, B4 6JU. Approx 7 minutes walk from Snow Hill main-line railway station and has ample street parking nearby. Meetings remain open to QUANTA members and non-members alike.

After your first meeting you're expected to pay £1 each time towards the organisation and monthly newsletter costs - except once a year when the group pays all those who attend a pound instead ;-)

We provide food twice a year for those who attend the AGM and the group's birthday party) and at meetings we discuss all sorts of things, QL-related and otherwise, usually from about 8:20pm onwards till 10:30 or later. The group owns QL hardware, a disk library and subscribes to relevant magazines. People can join the mailing list for £3.50 per year, even if they can't attend regularly.

Meetings : Meetings are usually on the first and third Monday of each month (but not on bank holidays unless the previous one was cancelled for that reason).

Contact : The contact number remains Mike Bedford White's, on 0121 605 4438, anytime after 11am.

Email: mikebwhite@blueyonder.co.uk

QUANTA DORSET SUBGROUP - Dorset

Meetings are held, on the second Sunday of each month between 2.00pm and 5.00pm.

For location please contact:- John Penn-Simkins or John Mason.

John Penn-Simkins 01202 422491 or John Mason 01425 275894

LONDON QL AND QUANTA GROUP

Meetings are held in the School Room, which is the basement of the Borough Welsh Congregational Chapel, 90, Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1. This is almost opposite the junction with Marshalsea Road, at the other end of which, 5 minutes walk away, is the Borough Underground Station. Free parking is easily available in Southwark Bridge Road for road users, Cyclists are welcome.

Members currently each pay a subscription of £40 per year towards the cost of the hire of the hall and a small additional charge is made for tea/coffee - biscuits are then provided free.

Please bring your QL equipment if possible, all types welcome, e.g., PC portable running emulators. The Group has some systems stored at the venue for its use. In addition, there are lots of donated second user equipment, books, magazines, etc, available for purchase.

Time: 2.00 pm. to 5.00 pm., on the second Sunday of the month.

No meetings are held in either December - winter break, or August summer break. Giving 10 meetings a year.

Malcolm Cadman: Tel: 020 8691 5780

email: QL@mcad.demon.co.uk

NEMQLUG - THE NORTH EAST MANCHESTER QL USER GROUP

Meetings are held at 181, Urmston Lane, Stretford, Manchester. M32 9EH (Near Junction 7 of M60 Motorway - Was Junction 7 M63 Motorway). Our informal meetings start at 7 p.m. and finish at 11 pm. All welcome.

Meets on the last Thursday of each month (except December).

John/Sarah Gilpin 0161-865 2872 (thegilpins@btopenworld.com)

SCOTTISH QL USERS GROUP

SQLUG meets at George Gwilt's home every second Sunday in the month. Please contact George Gwilt before coming to get the location.

Gdgqler@gmail.com

SOLENT SUBGROUP

Meets at Botley Market Hall, all welcome. Park at the back and use side entrance.

1st Saturday of the month from 2.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

Graham Evans, Tel: 023 8040 3350.

SURREY QUANTA SUBGROUP (SQSG)

The group is currently trying other venues in the Leatherhead - Epsom area. If you plan to attend but do not get our emails, please phone or email Ken Bain for the latest location.

Meetings are 8.00 to 10.00 pm. On the last Wednesday of each month except December.

Ken Bain - 01932 - 347 432 (to midnight), kenb@bcs.org.uk

SUSSEX QL USER GROUP

Currently without a meeting place, anyone interested should contact Keith Mitchell or Roy Wood.

Roy Wood, 01273 430501 or Keith Mitchell, 01903 742263.